

Leibniz Dissertation Award 2026

The two Leibniz Association's Dissertation Awards, each worth 5,000 euros, are awarded in the two categories of the Humanities and Social Sciences as well as the Natural and Technical Sciences and honours two outstanding doctoral theses from the member institutes. By awarding the prize, the Leibniz Association documents its close ties with the universities and demonstrates the value it places on supporting young scientists. The highest scientific standards are applied in awarding the prize. The five sections play an important role in the selection of the award winner.

A number of necessary requirements must be met when submitting a proposal. The award criteria are used for decision-making within the sections and are the basis for the final selection of the award winners by the Leibniz Association Prize Jury.

Necessary requirements for the award are:

- The dissertation was mainly written at a Leibniz Institute and was written no more than two years ago in the year of the award (date of the doctoral certificate).
- The research work is of the highest scientific quality.

Awarding criteria

These include:

- the interdisciplinary significance of the dissertation,
- the applicability and/or the socio-political relevance of the work,
- (invited) lectures at important conferences,
- publications in (peer-reviewed) journals or with important academic publishers,
- international networks, e.g. co-operations, guest stays, projects,
- other prizes and awards.

Selection process

The scientific directors of the Leibniz Institutes and, if applicable, other members of the sections are eligible to make proposals. **Proposals must be submitted to the respective Spokesperson of the section by 15 May 2026.**

The sections (A and B for the category Humanities and Social Sciences; C, D and E for the category Natural and Technical Sciences) shall each select one or two candidates from the proposals received and submit their final proposals by **1 September 2026, in electronic form via a cloud or as a mail attachment up to max. 10 MB, to the respective section officers at the Leibniz Head Office.** If there are two nominations from a section, at least one of them must be a female scientist.

The proposal must be submitted with the following documents (in German or English):

- **Nomination proposal:** a cover letter written by the proposing director outlining the nominee's achievements in one to two pages,
- **CV:** this should include references to awards, scholarships, stays abroad, etc.,
- **List of publications:** Publications produced during the doctorate and afterwards, including (invited) lectures and posters at conferences, etc.,
- **Summary of the thesis** (max. two pages): to be written by the nominee, in which the most important results of the thesis are presented in a generally understandable way,
- **Dissertation reports:** two written reports within the framework of the doctoral examination process (unfortunately, further reports cannot be taken into consideration),
- **Diploma or Master's degree and doctoral certificate,**
- **a copy of the thesis.**

Please combine all documents into one PDF document, in the order outlined above. Only the dissertation can be sent separately. The documents, especially the doctoral reports, will of course be treated confidentially.

From a maximum of ten proposals (max. four for the Humanities and Social Sciences category and max. six for the Natural and Technical Sciences category), the Leibniz Association Prize Jury selects the two award winners.

The award ceremony will take place in December 2026 during the annual meeting of the Leibniz Association. Both the nominees and the award winners will be announced to the public in an appropriate manner.

Contact

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